

Press Release

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GOVERNOR O'MALLEY ANNOUNCES OPENING OF FIVE MARYLAND FOREIGN TRADE OFFICES

New offices double State's foreign presence with no upfront cost to taxpayers

BALTIMORE, MD (January 22, 2009) – Continuing his efforts to further Maryland's global reach and expand opportunities for local companies, Governor Martin O'Malley today announced the opening of five new foreign trade offices that will double the State's international presence. Located in the target areas of Japan, Canada, South Africa, Brazil and the Western Balkans (Montenegro), the offices will operate entirely on a contingency basis, and any future funding that would come from the State would be based solely on the individual foreign office representatives' ability to attract companies and jobs to Maryland. In November 2008, Maryland opened its first contingency office in South Korea, which is being run by Ellicott City-based IDI Corp.

"Operating these new foreign offices without any upfront investment of state taxpayer dollars is one of the many ways that we are reinventing government in Maryland," said Governor O'Malley. "We will not only be able to attract new foreign companies and jobs to the State and provide our local companies with new avenues for marketing and trade, but also give Maryland an even greater global presence to help us weather these challenging economic times."

"Expanding Maryland's global footprint is great news for Maryland firms," said Deborah M. Kielty, President & Executive Director of the World Trade Center Institute in Baltimore. "There is no substitute for on-the-ground presence in international business."

In a first among U.S. states, Maryland's foreign trade office in the Western Balkans is located in Montenegro's capital city of Podgorica, housed in the same building as the U.S.-Montenegro Business Council. The office will look for opportunities and procurement projects in the region that may be of interest to Maryland companies, and will also work with companies in the Western Balkans interested in establishing a presence in the U.S. market. The region was targeted as an ideal trade partner for Maryland because of a recent spike in exports, which grew 250 percent from January to October 2008 to more than \$30 million.

Maryland has also established its first trade office in Canada, which is being run by Toronto-based Stuart & Co. Management Inc. Given the close integration of U.S. and Canadian markets, the office will work to boost Canadian companies' presence in Maryland, which currently employ more than 5,000 workers here. In 2007, Canada was Maryland's largest export destination, importing nearly \$1.5 billion in products and services.

Maryland has also reopened its Brazil office and has contracted with TVZ International,

which has among its partners Magda Völker, who represented Maryland in Brazil from 1997 through 2007. Brazil's vibrant economy provides opportunities in the defense, aircraft and bio energy sectors. As it had done in the past, the Brazil office will help Maryland companies with trade assistance and also identify FDI opportunities for Brazilian companies in Maryland. TVZ International is currently developing a link on its website www.tvzinternational.com.br to offer quicker and more efficient services to Maryland companies.

Maryland is also reopening its Japan foreign trade office, which closed several years ago. Maryland's Japan office is located in Tokyo and is being run by Kojiro Abe, president of Abe Enterprises, who previously ran the State's Japan trade office and was successful in attracting a number of Japanese companies to Maryland, including a major Japanese life sciences company. In 2007, Japan was Maryland's 10th largest export destination, buying nearly \$350 million in Maryland goods and services. Currently, Maryland is home to more than 70 Japanese companies that employ 5,000 workers.

A tremendous surge in exports to South Africa has led Maryland to reestablish its presence there, and recently contracted with Zurcom International (Pty) Ltd., which has offices in Pretoria, Durban and the island Republic of Mauritius. In the past three years, Maryland exports to South Africa have nearly doubled and the state is looking to capitalize on these opportunities. The new South African office plans to launch a website for Maryland businesses in early 2009.

"Maryland has an active business community with interests in Africa," said Richard Zurba, Director of Zurcom International (Pty) Ltd., Maryland's South African trade office contactor. "Our efforts will also extend to assisting Maryland companies that are new to the market and assist in wealth creation for Maryland communities."

Through its main office in Baltimore and 10 offices around the globe, the Maryland Department of Business and Economic Development's Division of International Investment and Trade works to stimulate foreign direct investment in Maryland, offers export assistance for small and mid-sized Maryland companies and coordinates international trade and investment missions and trade show opportunities for Maryland companies. DBED's other foreign offices include China (Shanghai), South Korea, Taiwan, Israel and Europe (Paris).

About DBED:

The Maryland Department of Business and Economic Development stimulates private investment and creates jobs by attracting new businesses, encouraging the expansion and retention of existing companies, and providing workforce training and financial assistance to Maryland companies. The Department promotes the State's many economic advantages and markets local products and services at home and abroad to spur economic development and international investment, trade and tourism. Because they are major economic generators, the Department also supports the Arts, film production, sports and other special events. For more information, visit www.choosemaryland.org.

About WTCI:

Financed jointly by area businesses and the State of Maryland, the World Trade Center Institute is Maryland's premier global business partner. As the largest international business network of

its kind, Maryland firms benefit from WTCI's connections, international programs/events, and extensive international business services. Visit www.wtci.org for additional information.